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History

The early history of the Weber Basin Project is very similar to the history of the Ogden and Weber River Projects. Weber River water was first used by new settlers for irrigation about 1848. The development was reasonably rapid, and by 1896 more than 100 canal companies had begun to divert water from the river or its tributaries and had established rights to all of the normal summer flow. Storage of spring flood flows was undertaken to overcome shortages during the late irrigation season or drought periods. The 3,850-acre-foot East Canyon Reservoir, constructed by private interests on a tributary of the Weber River in 1896, was one of the first storage developments. It was enlarged to a capacity of 29,000 acre-feet in 1916. Numerous small reservoirs, ranging up to 1,900-acre-foot capacity, also were constructed by irrigation companies.

Investigations

Two Bureau of Reclamation reservoirs were constructed on the Weber River system before authorization of the Weber Basin Project. The 74,000-acre-foot Echo Reservoir on Weber River was completed in 1931 as the principal feature of the Weber River Project. The 44,000-acre-foot Pineview Reservoir on the Ogden River was completed in 1936 as a part of the Ogden River Project. Additional canals and conduits were built under the Ogden River Project. Some water from Weber river watershed is diverted to the Provo River Project through the Weber-Provo Diversion Canal, constructed as a part of the Weber River Project and enlarged by the Provo River Project.

Planning for the Weber Basin Project started in 1942, was discontinued during the war years, and was resumed in 1946 when it became apparent that the marked population growth in the project area during World War II was permanent. Newcomers, attracted mainly by war installations, remained after the war ended, creating an acute demand for municipal water and accentuating the need for additional irrigation supplies. A status report on investigations was made in January 1948. A project report issued July 1949 led to congressional authorization of the project in 1949. The first appropriation of construction funds was made July 9, 1952. The definite plan report was prepared in 1952. This initial report was revised in 1955 and 1959.

Authorization

Construction of the Weber Basin Project was authorized by the Congress on August 29, 1949 (63 Stat. 677).

Construction

First contracts for construction of project features were awarded in 1956. All were completed in 1969.

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